

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMONSUL FRANKFURT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3986

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: STREET BATTLES IN FRANKFURT

1. SUMMARY: PITCHED STREET BATTLES IN FRANKFURT BETWEEN POLICE AND DEMONSTRATORS PROTESTING THE EVICTION OF ANARCHIST SQUATTERS FROM CONDEMNED BUILDINGS HAVE RESULTED IN SOME EIGHTY INJURIES AND ILLUSTRATE THE DILEMMA OF A POLITICIAN WHO SEEKS TO PRESERVE A LEFT-IST IMAGE OF MILITANT PROTEST WHILE FACED WITH PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. LOCAL NEWSPAPERS OF MARCH TWENTY- NINE AND APRIL TWO, WHICH ARE RECEIVED IN BONN AND IN WASHINGTON, REPORTED IN DETAIL ON STREET BATTLES IN FRANKFURT MARCH TWENTY- EIGHT AND MARCH THIRTY- ONE BETWEEN POLICE AND DEMONSTRATORS PROTESTING COURT ORDER EVICTING SQUATTERS FROM HOUSE WHICH HAS BEEN CONDEMNED TO MAKE WAY FOR ANOTHER OFFICE BUILDING IN WHAT USED TO BE RESIDENTIAL AREA BETWEEN OLD OPERA HOUSE AND UNIVERSITY. FIRST CONFLICT TOOK PLACE WHEN JUDGE UNWISELY ANNOUNCED IN ADVANCE SPECIFIC TIME AT

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WHICH EVICTION ORDER WOULD BE SERVED, AND FIVE HUNDRED TO ONE THOUS- AND DEMONSTRATORS MASSED BEHIND STREET BARRICADES TO PREVENT BAILIFF AND POLICE FROM ENTERING BUILDING. ABOUT THIRTY PERSONS WERE INJURED AND A DOZEN ARRESTED. PROTEST ORGANIZED BY " COUNCIL OF OCCUPIED HOUSES," COMPRISING SEVERAL LEFT- WING GROUPS AND SUPPORTED BY JUSOS (SPD YOUTH) AND ASTA (UNIVERSITY STUDENT COUNCIL). POLICE PENETRATED BARRICADES BUT DID NOT ENTER BUILDING. VIOLENCE BEING COMPARED WITH 1968 VIETNAM FRACASES.

3. JUBILANT RADICAL S CALLED FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS FOR MARCH THIRTY AND THIRTY- ONE TO CELEBRATE VICTORY AND TO WARN AUTHORITIES AGAINST CARRYING OUT EVICTION ORDER. LORD MAYOR ARNDT AT FIRST PROHIBITED BOTH DEMONSTRATIONS BUT RELENED AFTER NEGOTIATIONS WITH ORGANIZERS TO PERMIT MARCH THIRTY GATHERING, WHICH PASSED WITHOUT SERIOUS INCIDENT, AND THEN ACCOUNCED BAN ON MARCH THIRTY- ONE RALLY WOULD NOT BE EXECUTED IF DEMONSTRATORS WOULD DISARM AND NOT PROCEED BEYOND OLD OPERA TOWARD CITY CENTER. TWO TO THREE THOUSAND DEMONSTRATORS MARCHED PEACEFULLY IN APPROVED AREA AND OFFICIALLY DISBANDED, BUT LARGE NUMBER REASSEMBLED IN CITY CENTER AND PITCHED BATTLE ENSUED. FIFTY INJURED AND ANOTHER DOZEN ARRESTED. IN BOTH BATTLES HALF OF INJURED WERE POLICE.

4. ARNDT AND POLICE CHIEF MUELLER (BOTH SPD) BLAME VIOLENCE ON RADICALS IMPORTED FROM BERLIN AND ELSEWHERE, WHILE ORGANIZERS CLAIM POLICE STRUCK FIRST. JUSOS AND CHAIRMAN OF JUNGE UNION (CDU YOUTH) HAVE ACCUSED POLICE OF BRUTALITY AND UNNECESSARY FORCE AND DEMANDED MUELLER' S DISMISSAL. ORGANIZERS HAVE DEMANDED ARNDT' S RESIGNATION. LEFT- WING FRANKFURT SPD EXECUTIVE PASSED RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ATTACKS ON SPD OFFICE HOLDERS IN PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTY. MUELLER HAS DESCRIBED RESISTANCE TO LEGAL AUTHORITY AS APPROACHING " CIVIL WAR" PROPORTIONS, AND ARNDT INSISTS COURT ORDER WILL BE CARRIED OUT. ANOTHER DEMONSTRATION IS PLANNED FOR APRIL SEVEN, AND CITY AUTHORITIES HAVE NOT YET ANNOUNCED WHAT THE OFFICIAL ATTITUDE WILL BE .

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5. COMMENT: OCCUPATION OF EMPTY HOUSES IN FRANKFURT' S WEST- END BY RADICAL SNAD ANARCHISTS PROTESTING LACK OF LOW RENT HOUSING AND GRADUAL CONVERSION OF AREA TO COMMERCIAL PURPOSES IN OLD STORY

AND HAS OFTEN LED TO VIOLENCE ON SMALLER SCALE. ARNDT AND HIS
" LEFT CENTER" ADMINISTRATION HAVE BEEN TOLERANT OF THESE ACTIVITIES
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UNTIL GANG OF DEMONSTRATORS REPRESENTING " COUNCIL OF OCCUPIED
HOUSES"
INVADED
E E E E E E E

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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